

## BOOK REVIEWS

ROBERT H. MOHLENBROCK. Foreword by MIKE DOMBECK. 2006. **This Land: A Guide to Western National Forests.** (ISBN 0-520-23967-9, pbk.). The University of California Press, Berkeley, CA 94704, U.S.A. (**Orders:** California Princeton Fulfillment Services, 1445 Lower Ferry Road, Ewing, NJ 08618, U.S.A. www.ucpress.edu, 609-883-1759, Fax 609-883-7413). \$24.95, 391 pp., 63 color illustrations, 9 b/w photographs, 71 maps, 19 figures, 6" × 9".

The Mohlenbrock family spent virtually all their vacations exploring U.S. national forests. Because he is a botanist, Robert H. Mohlenbrock focused on special areas within the National Forest System, Research Natural Areas, which are "designated in perpetuity for research and education, to maintain biological diversity on National Forest System lands..." In 1984 he began writing a monthly column in *Natural History* magazine, published by the American Museum of Natural History in New York. He was asked to write in this column about areas in the national forests which he found interesting; not always because they were pretty, rather because they had a biological or geological story to tell. He called his column "This Land", and the theme is the same as that of his book, titled *THIS LAND: A Guide to Western National Forests*.

In his Foreword, Mike Dombeck, Chief Emeritus of the U.S. Forest Service, gives the reader a sweeping history of actions taken in the United States to honor and protect our forests:

—1864 Henry David Thoreau called for establishment of "national preserves" of virgin forests, "not for idle sport or food, but for inspiration and our own true re-creation."

—1864 President Abraham Lincoln signed legislation which granted Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Big Tree Grove to the care of the state of California "for public use, resort, and recreation."

—1891 Our first forest reserve, Yellowstone Park Timber Land Reservation, was created by President Benjamin Harrison.

—Toward the end of the nineteenth century, President Grover Cleveland established another 21 million acres of forest reserves.

—President Theodore Roosevelt expanded our forest reserves and established our first national wildlife refuges and national monuments, moving the country toward an ethic of conservation. In 1905 The USDA Forest Service was established to manage the national forests "for the greatest good for the greatest number for the long run."

The strength of this publication is its organization, which makes it easy to use by interested lay citizens as well as seasoned outdoorsfolk and professional scientific sorts. The eight chapters focus on eight western states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington. Each chapter begins with a map of the state and its national forests; chapter subsections on those forests (in alpha order) begin with a map of the national forest and its surrounding area including cities, highways and ranger stations. Within the text are descriptions of special characteristics of each of the forests - natural, political and recreational features. Mohlenbrock has included many black and white botanical drawings throughout the book and an index of plant names. Also, there are a number of black and white photos and sixty-two color plates.

The author's relaxed narrative style creates an easy conversational tone as the reader travels with him through these western forests. He notes useful details, such as milepost numbers, trail names (and directions for finding them!), weather and terrain characteristics, and practical definitions of terms specific to each area. Personal anecdotes add colorful interest points and contribute to the reader's sense of sharing in his experiences.—Karen Burkett, *Herbarium Volunteer, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Fort Worth, TX, 76102-4060, U.S.A.*

ANTON RAJER. 2006. **Museums, Zoos & Botanical Gardens of Wisconsin: A Comprehensive Guidebook.** (ISBN 0-9664180-0-X, pbk.). Fine Arts Publishing in cooperation with University of Wisconsin Press, 1930 Monroe Street, 3rd Floor, Madison, WI 53711-2059, U.S.A. (**Orders:** <http://www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/>). \$17.95, 304 pp., illustrated, maps, 6" × 9".

A lifetime of experiences have gone into the making of this guidebook. The author has grown up visiting the museums, zoos, and botanical gardens in his native state. He has described over 540 institutions in this fascinating, well-researched guidebook which covers the full gamut of cultural and natural history institutions in Wisconsin.

The book is arranged geographically into four regions, and then by town in each region. A map accompanies each and locates the cities in which an attraction is located. Each site is described and includes the street address, contact numbers, hours of operation, admission fees, and collection highlights. There are indexes to help visitors find interesting sites by: institutional type, institution, and by city. He also includes a listing of helpful contacts. The botanical garden entries are very complete and include web information and specific opening hours, and days, where appropriate. Each entry has a detailed narrative paragraph, or two, about the site and the attractions to be found there.

Well illustrated and arranged. Recommended reading for those who will be traveling in the Badger State.—Gary Jennings, *Library, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 509 Pecan Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102-4060, U.S.A.*